

Life After NESWC Committee
Minutes of Meeting
August 23, 2004
Town Hall Room 204

Members present: John Murray (staff), Ann Chang, Pat Clifford, Peter Ashton, Carol Holley (clerk), David Stone, Bob Johnson (chairperson)

Guest: Gary McCarthy

The meeting was called to order at 7:11 p.m.

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Ms Chang moved to accept the minutes as submitted, Mr. Johnson seconded, and all voted in favor.

The CDM proposal for drafting RFP's was discussed. There had been three responses to the solicitation of engineering firms, and CDM was selected because it had decent personnel, a history of appropriately sized projects, and a reasonable price of \$17,850. A contract has been issued.

Mr. Murray noted that the site conditions documentation is in the works; the DEP files have been reviewed for this purpose. Town Counsel is writing the legal portions of the RFPs because different types of law apply to different types of bidding. The process is under way.

Ms Clifford asked when the RFPs would be ready. Mr. Murray stated the schedule was as written in the proposal. The RFPs may be brought before the committee for tweaking, and then they will be released. The RFPs are to be released on September 15. Mr. Murray stated he has asked CDM for electronic copies. Mr. Murray will not be forwarding the legal language and site conditions because the legalese doesn't matter that much to this process. Mr. McCarthy asked if the site conditions are common to each RFP, and Mr. Murray said they were.

The different potential reuses will be sent out as RFPs to targeting businesses. Mr. Stamski felt that a consultant might be required for expertise on what each business needs to succeed. The RFPs will ask for the longest possible term, but the Town wants fewer constraints. Length of time commitment to a reuse will be a factor when rating proposals. Mr. Stone asked why the town was not going to specify a time limit; Mr. Murray replied that in public works certain methods are not appropriate.

Mr. Murray noted that the town had conducted exploratory borings, but it was not known if a refusal was due to bedrock or a boulder. Staff has been working on getting the best possible set of information out for the RFPs.

Mr. McCarthy asked CDM agreed with the approach the Town was taking, or if they suggested other uses; Mr. Murray replied that CDM hadn't mentioned any other potential uses.

Ms Clifford asked if there were 13 separate RFPs planned. Mr. Murray noted that some of the uses can be grouped together in a single RFP, like different permutations of the transfer station, but development options will be more independent. Sorting through the proposals will be a big job for the committee. Ms Clifford asked if there were any requirements in dealing with the proposals. Mr. Murray felt not; the committee can reject all the proposals if they don't like the responses they receive. Mr. Johnson noted that some of the proposals will be mutually exclusive.

Mr. Stone noted that if we feel an option should be explored and we don't have adequate discovery, we can always take a one-year NESWC contract to buy more time. Mr. Johnson felt that if the committee stuck to the time-line the extra year wouldn't be needed, but admitted that the schedule was tight.

Mr. Stone observed that the status quo is the lease likely to generate public opposition. There will be a cost to running the transfer station if we kept the hours and stopped brokerage, but it's not big numbers. Development proposals involve a lot more groundwork than some more modest changes.

Mr. Ashton noted the thought is that when CDM drafts the RFPs staff will circulate them, hopefully electronically, to the committee and the committee can provide comments. Mr. Murray noted that there was no time for major re-writes. Ms Clifford observed that the committee should, therefore, meet before September 14. Mr. Stone asked if the committee should consider deputizing a subcommittee to determine whether a meeting of the whole is required or not. Ms Clifford asked what the makeup of such a subcommittee would be. Mr. Stone posited that most of the feedback might not be controversial. Mr. Ashton felt that if the RFPs were obtained with enough lead time the entire committee could review them. Mr. Stone observed that the RFPs will be on the consent agenda unless somebody has objections; Mr. Ashton believed the committee would have about a week to review them. It was agreed that Mr. Murray will send out the RFP's and, if people think a meeting is required, it will be held.

Mr. Ashton asked where the process of financial analysis of a town-operated transfer station stood. Mr. Murray will provide the appropriate subcommittee with that information, and noted that it looked like a break-even both ways at first glance. Mr. Murray reported that the Town's trash brokerage consultant, Mr. Howe, had suffered a stroke and the brokerage efforts were currently on hold.

Regarding publicity/outreach, Mr. Johnson presented the verbiage he had drafted on the alternatives. The plan, he noted, was to send this out to the Beacon and the Globe. Mr. Ashton suggested a phone call to discuss the topic with the appropriate reporter, followed by something in writing. Mr. Ashton also suggested summarizing the issues and not including all the specific alternatives to be considered.

Mr. McCarthy suggested breaking the information down into transfer station alternatives, landfill alternatives, and trash disposal alternatives. Mr. Stone related the original concern that people know something about commercial development, town use (such as recreation), etc. Mr. Murray suggested an expansion of the first two paragraphs of the document, discussing a brain-storming process and looking at a universe of options, etc. Mr. Johnson stated that he will redraft the document. Mr. McCarthy wished to send the press a fact sheet to give reporters something in writing, providing appropriate buzz words, proper spelling, and a general understanding of the matter. Mr. Murray suggested adding a reference to the April 2005 Town Meeting, and the expiration date of the NESWC contract. Mr. McCarthy suggested saying that the goal of the committee is to have a recommendation for town approval in the spring of '05. Mr. Johnson will redraft and send the new document to the committee members. Mr. Murray noted that this is to give people an idea of where we are going.

Regarding next steps, it was noted that RFPs are being developed and the timeline being filled in. The committee agreed that the goal was to try to get this process done for April Town Meeting. Mr. Johnson observed that there isn't any way to make up time, and there are ways to lose it. Mr. Murray felt that this process should be done step by step; everyone agreed it was better to do it right than hurry up just to do something.

Future meeting schedules were discussed. Mr. Ashton felt that a meeting date to discuss the RFPs should be scheduled; it can always be cancelled if it is not required. The committee agreed on September 13 at 7:00 a.m., at Town Hall. There will be feedback regarding proposers' concerns that will be expressed at the proposers' pre-bid conference, to be held in early October.

Ms Clifford asked, if CDM gets 30 questions from bidders, what happens? Mr. Murray replied, all the questions are gathered up and answered all at once. Usually, there is also a meeting that includes a site walk and a subsequent discussion. The major players on the transfer station have walked already, but the reuse people haven't. This event hasn't been scheduled yet. There is a Special Town Meeting on October 18 and a Selectmen's meeting on the 19th so the LAN could meet on the 13th (Wednesday) at 7 p.m. in Room 204. The State of the Town meeting will probably be scheduled for November 30 or December 1.

Mr. Ashton moved to adjourn, Ms Clifford seconded, and all voted in favor. Meeting adjourned 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Holley
Clerk